

# The Syllabus

A newsletter for  
Kansas State University  
Master of Agribusiness  
students, alumni & friends

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## Welcome to the 16th MAB cohort, the Class of 2015

**Kelley Ayres**

President/CEO  
First Bank and Trust Company  
Minden, Nebraska

**Ryan Bennett**

Director, Government Relations  
National Milk Producers  
Washington, D.C.

**Kevin Black**

Market President  
Pinnacle Bank  
Verdigre, Nebraska

**Jorge Calderon Gutierrez**

Operations Manager  
La Gorriona Cattle Company  
Muzquiz, Coahuila, Mexico

**Curtis Cretin**

Diagnostic Author  
John Deere Intelligent Solutions Group  
Urbandale, Iowa

**Mary Gleason**

Data Process Lead for SAP  
Cargill-Horizon Milling  
Hopkins, Minnesota

**Brett Goodman**

Account Manager  
DuPont Pioneer  
Grand Forks, North Dakota

**Timothy Hammerich**

Trader  
Capstone Commodities, LLC  
Round Rock, Texas

**Matthew Krueger**

Operations Manager  
K & D Krueger Farms & Sons, LLC  
East Grand Forks, Minnesota

**Douglas Lind**

Merchandising Leader  
Cargill  
Shelton, Nebraska

**Jesse Maddox**

Taxidermist  
Wildlife Creations  
Omaha, Nebraska

**Jason Madsen**

Senior Product Engineer  
John Deere Company  
Olathe, Kansas

**Jacob Maurer**

Grain Administrator  
Farmway Cooperative Inc.  
Clay Center, Kansas

**Jorge Miranda**

Assistant Plant Scientist  
Syngenta  
Junction City, Kansas

**Brook Mitchell**

Agronomist/Sales  
Wilbur-Ellis  
Hiawatha, Kansas

**Andy Montgomery**

National Sales Manager  
AgReliant Genetics – AgriGold Hybrids  
St. Francisville, Illinois

**Claudia Montoya Nunez**

Manager  
Ganaderia Ventura  
Francisco Morazan, Honduras

**Brian Myers**

Alliance Development Manager  
John Deere Company  
Olathe, Kansas

**Allison Nunes**

Credit Analyst  
Yosemite Farm Credit, ACA  
Los Banos, California

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First-year students: Kelley Ayres, Jason Madsen and Brian Myers

**Dr. Allen Featherstone**

Program Director  
afeather@ksu.edu

**Mary Bowen**

Program Associate  
mjbowen@ksu.edu

**Deborah Kohl**

Program Coordinator  
dkohl@agecon.ksu.edu

785.532.4495

mab.ksu.edu

mab@agecon.ksu.edu

**Master of Agribusiness**

Kansas State University  
Department of  
Agricultural Economics  
324 Waters Hall  
Manhattan, KS 66506-4011

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# Alumni Spotlight

## Walter von Muhlen Filho

Class of 2005  
Wheat Trader  
Trimil Grain Market  
Porto Alegre, Brazil

by Mary Bowen

### MAB alum shares about wheat trading in Brazil

Walter von Muhlen Filho was working in a rice mill trading rice when the Brazilian government deregulated wheat imports in the early 1990s. He thought wheat trading might be interesting, so he shifted to trading imported wheat to millers in south and central Brazil.

"In fact trading wheat was much more dynamic than rice. Wheat trading is information coming to reality," he said. "There are so many issues to be aware of including the weather, logistics, futures markets, exchange and interest rates, and government regulations because they all can affect trading."

Wheat in Brazil is grown during the dry, winter season (planted in April/May) when land and farm equipment are not being used for soybeans or corn. In some areas, it competes with a second corn crop or canola depending on the expected prices on crops.

Production is concentrated in the southern part of the country with two states Parana and Rio Grande do Sul, producing 90% of the country's crop. Average production is just over 5 million metric tons, which is about half of Brazil's demand. The balance needed to support demand is imported mainly from Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay and some from the U.S. and Canada. The wheat imported from Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay has no taxes, because they are members of the MERCOSUR Economic Block, while

to Brazil's strong currency, internal taxes, and the cost of logistics to move wheat to the northern part of the country.

"There are two primary reasons why Brazil is a large importer of wheat in the world market. First, domestic wheat supplies are inadequate to meet the needs of the vast internal Brazilian wheat market. Second, Brazilian millers find it is necessary to import higher-quality foreign wheat supplies to blend with domestic Brazilian wheat to produce flour for baking, pasta and cookies," he said.

wheat from other origins has to pay import taxes. Still in many cases, imported wheat from MERCOSUR countries has been less expensive than domestic wheat due

Master of Agribusiness program.

"K-State is a magnet for grain people worldwide, so I knew the high quality of programs provided. The MAB program offered the opportunity to learn tools to better analyze trading information, as well as exchange ideas and learn from classmates and faculty working throughout the industry," Walter said. "After being out of school for several years, beginning the program was a bit like being in another planetary system, but the faculty, staff and classmates motivate you to succeed. After I finished, I had increased knowledge of the industry, but also increased my networking and information channels."

Another benefit of the MAB program was the opportunity to use his experience in the grain market and skills learned in the MAB program to create a model to gain a better understanding of how different variables affect Brazilian



Walter von Muhlen Filho (left) and Terry Garvert at the 2009 MAB Professional Development Event in Kansas City.

The MAB program offered the opportunity to learn tools to better analyze trading information, as well as exchange ideas and learn from classmates and faculty working throughout the industry.

Walter frequently participates in seminars, short courses and wheat tours around the world to learn and network with others in the grain industry. It was while attending one of these short courses

wheat imports. The variables he examined in his 2006 thesis, "Estimating a Brazilian Demand Function for Wheat Imports," included both the imported and domestic prices of wheat in Brazil, gross domestic product, exchange rates, and government intervention policies.

For those interested in entering the trading field, he has these words of advice:

"Grain trading is nothing else than

at Kansas State University's International Grains Program (IGP), he learned of the

Walter continued on pg 4



**Hamid Rutaro**  
 Profit Manager/  
 Direct Sales  
 Representative  
 Cooperative  
 Resource  
 International (CRI)  
 Madison, Wisconsin

**Lance Simwanza**  
 Manager -  
 Agribusiness  
 First National Bank  
 (Zambia) Limited  
 Lusaka, Zambia

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**Taylor Oliver**  
 Oil and Gas Offshore IFR Captain  
 PHI, Inc.  
 Manhattan, Kansas

**Winnie Pele**  
 Redirect Investigator  
 Barclays Bank Zambia PLC  
 Lusaka, Zambia

**Colin Peterson**  
 Territory Sales Manager  
 New Holland Agriculture  
 Denver, Colorado

**Paul Popelka**  
 Operation Manager  
 Frito-Lay Inc.  
 Gothenburg,  
 Nebraska

**Rebecca Reese**  
 Administrative  
 Assistant  
 Hill's Pet Nutrition  
 Topeka, Kansas

**Heather Rimel**  
 Program  
 Coordinator  
 Montana Seed  
 Growers Association  
 Bozeman, Montana

**Wyatt Rundel**  
 Relationship  
 Manager; Assistant  
 Vice President  
 Bank of the West  
 Wichita, Kansas

**Nicholas Sousek**  
 Grain Originator  
 Farmers Cooperative  
 Dorchester, Nebraska

**Zephyrin Tshibambe Ndjibu**  
 General Manager  
 Z-CO SPRL  
 Kinshasa, Congo (DRC)

**Chris Westergard**  
 Owner/Manager  
 Westergard Farms LLC  
 Dagmar, Montana

**Dontae' Williams**  
 Compliance Investigator  
 USDA - Risk Management Agency  
 Kansas City, Missouri

**MAB  
 Class of  
 2015**

*Top: Jacob Maurer and Winnie Pele.  
 Bottom: Rebecca Reese, Hamid  
 Rutaro and Jorge Calderon work  
 together during the January campus  
 session.*



## Calendar of Events

**March 17-22**  
 MAB Campus Session

**March 21-23**  
 Minorities in Agriculture, Natural  
 Resources and Related Sciences  
 (MANRRS) Conference and Career  
 Fair in Sacramento, Cal.

**April 2**  
 Deadline to schedule oral  
 defense to have name printed in  
 commencement program

**April 15**  
 AGECE 710, Comparative Food and  
 Agriculture Systems course begins

**April 26**  
 Final electronic copy of thesis due  
 to Graduate School to be spring  
 graduate

**May 10**  
 Final electronic copy of thesis due  
 to Graduate School to be summer  
 '13 grad without enrolling for  
 summer hours

**May 17**  
 K-State spring commencement at  
 Bramlage Coliseum

**July 1**  
 Deadline to complete iSIS  
 Graduation Application

**July 14-16**  
 Institute of Food Technology Expo  
 in Chicago

**August 8-9**  
 Professional Development/Alumni  
 Reunion Event in Minneapolis, Mn.

**August 16**  
 Final electronic copy of thesis due  
 to Graduate School to be summer  
 graduate

# in the news...

**Joel Karlin** ('01) gave the 2013 California Dairy Outlook presentation at the Progressive Dairyman/World Ag Expo Dairy Seminar February 13 in Tulare, Cal.

**Mike Retallick** ('02) received the New Teacher Award at the Food and Agricultural Sciences Excellence in College and University Awards Program for his work as an associate professor of agricultural economics at Iowa State University.

**Carlos Piana** ('01) has taken a new position as the Purchasing and Exports Manager for INTERCIA, a paper, plastic, cardboard and electronics recycling company in Ecuador.

**Michael Kempke** ('13) and his wife Christy, welcomed Brady Christopher on January 4. Brady was 8 lbs, 9.5 oz and 20 inches. He joins brother Colby and sister Ava.

**Kurt Anderson** ('14) has accepted a new position for John Deere within their Parts Distribution Center. He will be managing the Sales Support Groups in Rock Valley, IA and Charlotte, NC supporting "All Makes" parts sales. In this new role, Kurt will be moving from Bettendorf, IA to Sioux Center, IA.

**Kevin Nielsen** ('11) has been promoted to Petroleum Division Manager at Ag Valley Cooperative.

**Chris Simms** ('09) and his wife were featured on America's Heartland.

**Sandra (Alton) Reid** ('06) and her husband Sandy, announced the birth of their second son, Corbin John Daniel Reid on December 15. He was 8 lbs, 2 oz and 21 inches long.

**Cody Ruby** ('11) and his wife welcomed twins Alexander and Benjamin Ruby on December 10.

**Steve Stephens** ('00) and Dr. Bryan Schurle collaborated on a paper titled "Impact of Rainfall, Sales Method, and Time on Land Prices" that was accepted for the 2013 *Journal of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers* and will be published soon.

**Emilie (Gein) Jensen** ('14) has accepted a new position as Capacity and Supply Analyst with Cargill in Gainesville, GA.

**Melissa (Frick) Brossard** ('06) and her husband Matt, announced the birth of their daughter, Harley Rae on November 29. Melissa also received a promotion to Regional Process Improvement Engineer for the Mid-Central Region for Bimbo Bakeries USA.

**Audra Geiger** ('11) and her husband Dustin welcomed twins Mason George and Natalie Grace on January 26.

**Tanner Ehmke** ('11) was selected to participate in the Sorghum Checkoff's inaugural Leadership Sorghum class consisting of 15 sorghum farmers from eight states for the purpose of educating class members about sorghum and developing the next generation of leaders for the sorghum industry.

**Marilyn Vass** ('04) has moved to Thermopolis, Wyo., and is now a Financial Counselor at Hot Spring County Hospital.

**Brett Goodman** ('15) and his wife Melissa welcomed their daughter Summer Kate Goodman on February 26. She was 7 lbs, 12 oz.

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information coming to reality, so you must create reliable channels of communications between you and your customers.

"Even with the modern technology (internet, skype, etc) I am a service provider and must see customers in person. Those who are not seen are not remembered.

"To gather information you must interact daily with all members of the business (exporters, harbor port operators, millers, agriculture cooperatives, etc), make your assumptions, use your perceptions to draw a strategy, stick to it and implement."

## Students complete thesis projects

To read current or previous thesis projects, go to <http://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/> and search by author, title or keywords (no log-in required). To read a thesis written before 2008 or view thesis defense, log onto K-State On-Line, [www.online.ksu.edu](http://www.online.ksu.edu), with your eID and password. Go to the MAB Community Page, go to Files & Content and click on Theses.

**Marvin Goertz** ('12), *Feasibility of Building a Greenfield Contract Manufacturing Plant*

**Kevin Nielsen** ('11), *Creating Value with Equity Management at Ag Valley Cooperative*

**Nate Schroeder** ('09), *Response to Population in Corn Hybrids with Specific Characteristics*

**Philippe Steffan** ('10), *An Optimization Model: Minimizing Flour Millers' Costs of Production by Blending Wheat and Additives*

**Chris Wagner** ('13), *Comparative Grain Storage Analysis*

## Mark your calendars now for the MAB Professional Development Event in Minneapolis!

The MAB program is pleased to partner with Cargill for our 5th Professional Development and Alumni Reunion Event. The event will be August 8 & 9, 2013 in Minneapolis, MN at Cargill's headquarters.

The event will include sessions on timely industry topics and tours of areas agribusinesses, as well as the opportunity to network with classmates and industry partners.

Be watching for more information about session topics and registration.